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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
July 7, 2009

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The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Secretary of State  
2201 C St NW Ste 7276  
Washington DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

I write with great concern regarding the violence that has erupted, and ensuing loss of life, in the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). While the specific details surrounding the events remain unclear, China's longstanding persecution and repression of the Uyghur people is well-documented, including by our own State Department, as is the government's history of covering up abuses and reacting violently in the face of peaceful protests.

It is worth noting that the reason for the absence of details surrounding the current situation is the government's persistent restriction of the media and the free flow of information. A July 6 VOA article indicated that residents of Xinjiang's capital "are reporting disruptions in their phone and Internet services."

AFP reports that "Chinese Human Rights Defenders, an activists group based in China, said it was concerned that those detained and arrested would be subjected to 'torture or inhumane treatment and swift, harsh punishment.'" They called on the authorities to ensure "that the rights of all citizens to a fair trial be upheld..."

The NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW) expressed similar concerns noting that, "Previous incidents of unrest in Xinjiang, as well as in the aftermath of the 2008 mass protests in Tibet, led to hundreds of unaccounted-for detentions, summary trials without the benefit of due process, and reports of torture and ill-treatment." HRW has called for the United Nations to conduct an independent investigation into the events and pointed out that China still has not allowed such an investigation into the violence in Tibet last year.

I too believe that an independent investigation is critical and urge you to work toward that end. Further, U.S. diplomatic personnel ought to engage at the highest levels to determine what transpired and to press the Chinese authorities to ensure that basic human rights including freedom of assembly, freedom of information and due process to name a few, are respected moving forward.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

THANK YOU